

HoltraChem Manufacturing, LLC
Orrington, Maine

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COMPLIANCE ORDER
PURSUANT TO 38 MRSA § 1304(12)

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. HoltraChem Manufacturing Company, LLC ("HMC" or "the facility") owns and operates a chlor-alkali facility on River Road in Orrington which manufactures chlorine, caustic soda, hydrochloric acid, and chloropicrin.
2. On Monday, November 17, 1997, at or about 5:00 p.m., approximately 1700 pounds of chlorine gas was released at the facility. The release occurred due to a rail switching error, causing a collision with a rail car which was in the process of being filled. The collision resulted in a rupture of the line carrying chlorine from the facility to the rail car, discharging chlorine gas. The chlorine gas drifted in a predominantly northerly direction off the HMC property. The incident exceeded the Reportable Quantity threshold and was reported to the State at 5:41 p.m.
3. There are alarms at the facility which can be sounded in the event of a chlorine leak. The alarms are in the control of the Orrington emergency response committee. However, there is no formal procedure adopted for sounding the alarms or to prescribe the appropriate response in the event of an alarm. The Orrington emergency response coordinator determined that no alarm was required for this release.
4. Chlorine is a toxic gas which causes burning in the eyes, throat, nose and lungs. Respiratory symptoms may be delayed for several hours. Significant exposure can cause vomiting, loss of consciousness, severe lung damage or death.
5. Chlorine gas has been designated as a hazardous matter pursuant to 38 MRSA §1319(1)(b).
6. The discharge of a hazardous matter into the ambient air without first having a license to do so is a violation of 38 MRSA §1317-A. HMC is not licensed to discharge chlorine into the ambient air.

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HoltraChem Manufacturing Company, LLC, is hereby ordered to:

- A. By December 1, 1997, submit to the Department and the Town of Orrington interim procedures for steps to be taken by HMC staff in the event of an alarm. Such procedures shall include steps for notification of the public.
- B. By December 1, 1997, communicate in writing to all residences within one mile of the facility, explaining the appropriate public response in the event of an alarm, providing a 24 hour hot line for public concerns and describing the possible effects of exposure to chlorine;
- C. By December 12, 1997, submit to the Department c/o David Sait, for review and approval, an evaluation and implementation schedule for additional fail-safe mechanisms and operator training in the event of a chlorine release;
- D. By December 15, 1997, convene an appropriate community group in the vicinity of the facility, including local and state emergency response personnel, to develop final protocols and procedures for emergency response and public notification in the event of a spill or release. HMC will make every effort to work with citizens and emergency response personnel to develop final protocols and procedures and have them submitted to the Department, c/o David Sait, for review and approval, by March 1, 1998.

So ordered this 19th day of November, 1997.

Edward O. Sullivan
Commissioner